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PRESS RELEASE

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GANG MEMBER ARRESTED WITH FIREARM AND CRACK COCAINE WHILE A FUGITIVE SENTENCED TO 20 YEARS IN FEDERAL PRISON

Los Angeles, CA - A Hollywood man who was arrested by a fugitive task force because he was wanted by state authorities on kidnapping charges was sentenced today to 20 years in federal prison for illegally possessing gun and narcotics, as well as assaulting a federal law enforcement officer when he was taken into custody.

Victor Cruz, 30, was sentenced this morning by United States District Judge Audrey B. Collins. Cruz pleaded guilty last year to federal charges of being a felon in possession of a firearm, possessing with the intent to distribute crack cocaine and assaulting a Deputy United States Marshal who was taking him into custody.

Cruz pleaded guilty to the three federal counts last August after serving approximately one year in state custody in the kidnapping case.

The federal sentencing results from a May 6, 2005, incident in which members of the Los Angeles Regional Fugitive Task Force went to Cruz's residence to arrest him on the state arrest warrant. Members of the Task Force approached Cruz, who was sitting in a vehicle behind his apartment, and ordered him out of the car. When Cruz refused to comply, law enforcement personnel approached him, engaged in a scuffle and eventually used a Taser to bring Cruz into custody. During the arrest, Cruz bit the hand of a Deputy Marshal, which constituted the assault on a federal officer. Once he was in custody, authorities discovered that Cruz was carrying a loaded 9mm semiautomatic handgun and approximately 110 grams – nearly a quarter-pound – of crack cocaine.

Cruz faced a mandatory minimum sentence of 20 years in federal prison for the narcotics trafficking offense because he was previously been convicted of a drug-related crime.

Members of the Los Angeles Regional Fugitive Task Force that participated in the arrest of Cruz included the United States Marshals Service; the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF); the Los Angeles Police Department; and the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development.

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